

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

INFORMATION

SECRET

November 28, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. KISSINGER  
FROM: RICHARD T. KENNEDY  
SUBJECT: Air Support for Laos

On November 18 you asked Secretary Laird to evaluate whether our F-4 and A-7 aircraft now available in SEA can properly perform the helicopter escort, and low ceiling, poor visibility close air support roles previously filled by the A-1 (Tab B). All the A-1s have been transferred to the VNAF.

Admiral Murphy has replied (Tab A) that the A-7 has assumed the missions formerly assigned to the A-1 and that initial operational experience in these roles has been quite satisfactory. The A-7 is programmed to remain in Thailand for the foreseeable future.

I believe this adequately answers your memorandum and completes action on this item.

OSD Review Completed

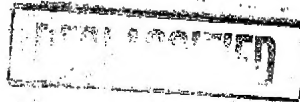
ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLY

John Holdridge concurs.

MORI/CDF C05074280

SECRET

DECLAS:12-31-80

~~SECRET~~OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

24 NOV 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. RICHARD T. KENNEDY, NATIONAL  
SECURITY COUNCIL STAFF

SUBJECT: Air Support for Laos

Your memorandum of 18 November 1972, subject as above, has been reviewed, and the following information is forwarded in response.

The US Air Force A-7 aircraft presently deployed at Korat RTAFB, Thailand, have assumed the missions formerly assigned to the A-1s which have been transferred to VNAF. Although we are still accumulating experience relative to the use of A-7s in the helicopter escort role, initial reports are quite encouraging. For instance, a memorandum from [REDACTED]

25X1  
25X1

The A-7D is an effective helicopter escort aircraft and is currently being used in this role in Laos. The aircraft is programmed to remain in Thailand for the foreseeable future.

Signed  
DANIEL J. MURPHY*Chit J. [unclear]*

DECLASSIFIED

Classified by Alis, EAPR  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED  
AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS. DECLASSIFIED ON 2/3/1998

~~SECRET~~Sec Def Cont Nr. X- 5566

*Col. [unclear]  
you sent [unclear]*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

November 18, 1972

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Air Support for Laos

The President has noted that as part of the effort to improve Vietnamese forces the A-1 aircraft previously stationed in Thailand and devoted heavily to support of Laos have been transferred to the VNAF. He wishes to be certain that we are able to continue to provide the helicopter escort and low ceiling, poor visibility close air support functions in Laos previously fulfilled by the A-1s.

He would appreciate your considering whether these roles can be properly performed by the high performance F-4 and A-7 aircraft currently available. In view of the precarious military situation in Laos, the critical importance of adequate and appropriate U.S. air support, and the approach of the dry season -- historically the time of highest enemy activity in Laos -- the President would appreciate your recommendations as a matter of urgency.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

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DECLAS:12-31-80